



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/537,357	06/03/2005	Yoshiomi Kondoh	081909-0124	2650

22428 7590 01/08/2010  
FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP  
SUITE 500  
3000 K STREET NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20007

EXAMINER
----------

BERDICHEVSKY, MIRIAM

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1795

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
-----------	---------------

01/08/2010

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/537,357	<b>Applicant(s)</b> KONDOH, YOSHIOMI	
	<b>Examiner</b> MIRIAM BERDICHEVSKY	<b>Art Unit</b> 1795	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 September 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                       | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/12/2009</u> .   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Remarks***

The double patenting rejection is maintained because the terminal disclaimer has not yet been fully processed and approved by the office.

### ***Claim Objections***

1. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: the word "scond" in the last line of the first page appears to contain a typo; the word "hcat" in the second to last line of the second page appears to contain a typo. Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. There does not appear to be support for the first and second conductive members having longitudinal lengths long enough to prevent a thermal effect.

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Art Unit: 1795

5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

6. Claim 1 recites the limitation "the second/first longitudinal end" in lines 7-8, 11 and 13, the limitation is not introduced until lines 17 and 23. The ordering is unclear and creates insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

7. The term "long enough" in claim 1 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "long enough" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. Appropriate clarification is required.

8. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted elements are: lines 1-2 of the second page recite that the joining member joins the first longitudinal end of the second conductive member but does not address what the first longitudinal end of the second conductive member is joined to.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 1795

10. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

11. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bijvoets (US 5006178) and Kessler (US 5515683).

As to claim 1, Bijvoets teaches a thermoelectric device electrically connected in series for the purpose of cooling (col. 1, lines 5-10 and 20-25). Bijvoets teaches a plurality of thermoelectric transducers (figure 1, 3 and 2), each of which includes a first conductive member (8s) and a second conductive member (10s) each having different Seebeck coefficients and a joining member joining the first and second conductive members by longitudinal ends (5s), a first coupling member (9 between 8s) connecting first conductive members and a second coupling member connecting the second conductive members, as the electricity flows through the string from left to right the electricity flows serially through the coupling members (col. 3, lines 1-5). Bijvoets teaches that the coupling member/intermediate member is lengthens the distance between the conductive members/semiconductors at a chosen length hardly generates joule heat (col. 1, line 30 to col. 2, line 5) which reads on the instant limitation of long enough to prevent a thermal effect (col. 6, lines 25-30). Moreover, Bijvoets teaches that the thermoelectric device is connected thermally in parallel such that one side is hot and the

Art Unit: 1795

other cold to create a difference in temperature across the device (col. 2, lines 55-60 and col. 5, lines 10-15). The Examiner notes that thermoelectric devices require such a thermal gradient to operate.

Bijvoets is silent to the application of a direct current power supply serially to one of the coupling members. However, the Examiner notes that one would appreciate that in order for the thermoelectric device to operate in a cooling mode, power must be applied to the device.

Kessler depicts the power supply connection to a thermoelectric device which maybe be used for either heating or cooling by applying power to the device in series (col. 2, lines 60-68; figures 1-2). Kessler supports Bijvoets by teaching that good cooling and heating can be achieved through well designed spatial arrangements and materials (col. 2, lines 65-68). The Examiner notes that as the components of Bijvoets are connected in series once power is applied the power is also connected serially and reads on the instant limitation.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to apply a direct power supply to serially connected device of Bijvoets in order to activate the device in cooling or heating mode especially in light of the fact that applying power to the device of Bijvoets would provide a reasonable expectation of success.

### ***Double Patenting***

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory

Art Unit: 1795

obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

### ***Response to Arguments***

12. Applicant's arguments filed 9/28/2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Bijvoets teaches the opposite structure of that in the instant claimed invention. The Examiner respectfully disagrees. Figure 2 of the instant claimed invention closely resembles that of Bijvoets where D, A, B, 24 of instant figure 2 are seen as 5, 8, 10 and 9 of Bijvoets. As there is no structural difference between the instant invention and the reference the two devices behave similarly. Applicant argues that the device of Bijvoets does behave as described by Bijvoets. However, attacking the references' science does not change the fact that the structure of Bijvoets reads on that of the claimed invention and therefore teaches the limitations of the claimed invention.

***Conclusion***

13. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

***Contact Information***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **MIRIAM BERDICHEVSKY** whose telephone number is (571)270-5256. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th, 10am-8pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jennifer Michener can be reached on (571) 272-1424. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



Art Unit: 1795

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/M. B./

Examiner, Art Unit 1795

/Jennifer K. Michener/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1795